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Ticonderoga, 23 Oct. 1781.

Gentlemen,

We are happy to inform you that His Excellency, General Haldimand signified to us that the remainder of the Prisoners including those of the Pero Union shall be sent forward as soon as convenient, and we ernestly intreat you to transmit to us on receipt of this Your opinion whether a Proclamation from His Excellency intimating his Humane Intentions towards Vermont, and her Unions, would at this time be acceptabe, or in any degree have a tendency to alleviate the calamities of war. We cannot account for the delay of the Prisoners Which Col. Ira Allen and Major Fay promised to send and we had every reason to expect on or about the 17th instant.

We have the honor to be
Gentlemen, your most
Humble & obedient Servants
J. Sherwood
Geo. Smyth

To the Governor &
Council.

Charlestown, Oct 21st, 1781.

Dear Sir,

Inclosed you will receive a letter to Capt Justus Sherwood, Commissioner of Prisoners, &c.; You will forward the same to him by flag, as was agreed When I saw you in Arlington. I suppose that Mr Blackley will be at your Quarters before you receive this, on his way to Canada. With the Governors Permission, with him you will forward said letter as it is of Consequence for our prisoners, I presume, are all anxious to get home..

Your Compliance will Oblige
the public & yours to Serve
Ira Allen

Col. E. Walbridge
Skeensborough.

Charlestown, October 20th, 1781.

Dear Sir,

Received yours of the 30th ultimo and marked well the contents.

You are no doubt impatient waiting a return from me but I must inform you that every matter has not operated as was expected yet in confidence and pursuant to my engagement I transmit the heads of facts that you lay the same before the General for his information, viz. A few days before the present Session of Assembly there was news from various quarters that Admiral De Grass had arrived at Chesapeak Bay with 28 ships of the line and three thousand land forces (Exclusive of the fleet at Rhode Island which is said are gone to Charlestown to act in conjunction with Gen. Green) That Admiral De Grass and the English fleet had a severe engagement in which the English were defeated, and the accounts appear to me so exaggerated that I shall not pretend to give you them. But by the New York papers it appears that the English were second best, and that the French kept the Bay, which prevents Lord Cornwallis retreat. General Washington with a division of his allied army have joined the Marquis (who commands in Virginia) and some report that Lord Cornwallace with his army are prisoners. These accounts, whether true or false, have their effect on the people. By the inclosed list of the officers of Government for the present Year, and by the marks of the number of new ones, you will see there has been a great change, which, in many instances I find favorable. But these matters are so delicate, and so many strangers, I have not sounded them all; yet it is to be observed there is spies from the other States, watching our motions. By the inclosed extract of the proceedings of the Committee of both Houses, you will see how we have dispensed with the Resolutions of Congress. The proposals to settle with the Neighboring States, we view in present circumstances as a politic way of closing the treaty with Congress, and which will tend much to strengthen internal connexions. There was but two dissenting votes in the whole.

It is with regret I am Necessetated to request that you do not send the proposed Proclamation at this time; as the before recited, & some other accounts seem to forbid it for the present. Yet the time will soon come when they will answer the design intended.

There is an account of Admiral Digby's arrival at New York, and that he has only three ships of the line. I however expect more favorable news from the Southward soon.

Movements in these parts but too much depend on success to the South, As the people do not feel themselves able to oppose the World, which makes it hard and some dangerous making the first public move, and to publish these matters before they are fully ripe, might at least endanger the whole system, so well calculated for the happiness of this people, and on which I have placed my ambition. You may depend that this people do not feel themselves under that obligation to Congress, as they once did; but are loosing sight of that object fast, and should the Genls patience hold out and the frontiers not be invaded to rouse that spirit, which there has been so much pains taken to lay, these matters may yet crown our most sanguine expectation In full confidence of this I submit the whole matter to those whose right it is to determine. I am, Dear Sir, Your affectionate

Ira Allen.

Capt. Justus Sherwood
Comr. Prisoners &c.

Arlington, December 15th, 1781.

Sir,

I have consulted a number of the members of my Council on the controversy between this & the State of New Hampshire, respecting the boundary lines between the two States; Whereupon I do hereby appoint and authorize you to repair to the Gen. Court of New Hampshire, and there use your influence that they comply with the Proposals of the Legislature of this State for an amicable settlement, thereby if possible to prevent the effusion of Human Blood, as the appearance of civil war will but too much give countenance to the common Enemy of these States

Thomas Chittenden.

To Col. Ira Allen.

(Copy)

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His Excellency Thomas Chittenden, Esqr.
(L.S.) Captain General, Governor and Commander
in Chief in and over the State of Vermont.

To the Honorable Elisha Payne, Jonas Fay, Ira Allen, and Peter Olcott, Esqrs, Daniel Jones, Esq. Col. Gideon Warren, Phinehas Whiteside Esqr. Col. Joseph Caldwell and Ezra Stiles Esqrs

Greeting, 27 October 1781

Agreeable to a resolution of the Governor and Council, and House of Assembly at their session held at Charlestown this Instant October, appointing you Commissioners for and in behalf of the State of Vermont to enter upon a Negotiation for the settlement and adjustment of the Boundary Lines as well between the State of New Hampshire and Vermont, as between the State of New York and Vermont agreable to your directions contained in the Resolutions aforesaid.

These are therefore, in the Name and by the Authority of the Freemen of the State of Vermont to authorize and amply empower you the said Elisha Payne, Jonas Fay, Ira Allen, Peter Olcott, Daniel Jones, Gideon Warren, Phinehas Whiteside Joseph Caldwell and Ezra Styles, or any five of you the said Commissioners to Compleat and carry into execution the Negotiation and Settlement of the said Boundary Lines of Jurisdiction between the said States of New Hampshire, and New York, with the said State of Vermont respectively agreeable to said Resolutions.

And I do hereby pledge the Faith of the said State of Vermont that the determination had in the Premises shall be held sacredly Binding on the Part of Vermont–

In Testimony whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and Caused the Seal of this

State to be affixed, In Council this 27th day of October, Anno Domini, One thousand Seven Hundred & Eighty One, and in the 5th year of the Independence of this State.

Thomas Chittenden.

By His Excellency's Command,
Tho: Tolman, Dep. Sec'y.

(Duplicate)

Quebec, 30th. September, 1781.

Gentlemen,

I do myself the pleasure to inform you that His Excellency, General Haldimand has been pleased to approve of our proceeding respecting political matters of exchange and likewise to consent to the parole of all prisoners belonging to your State including the East and West union So that you may expect the fort Ann Prisoners & all others belonging to you (independent of the other States, or any part of the Continental Army) as soon as they can be forwarded with convenience. As Capt Brownson left the Isle of Orleans too late to overtake the flag, that conducted the others, he was detained at Trois Rivers, but is now forwarded, and I hope may arrive safe.

Your proposals, My Querys and your answers have been laid before the General and I believe his Excellency will comply with the mode of Liberation therein mentioned without any material alteration.

I am with much respect
Your most Obedient and
Most Humble Servant
J. Sherwood.

Gentlemen
Ira Allen } Esqrs.
Joseph Fay }
Commissioners of
Exchange from Vermont.

Questions from Capt. Sherwood to the Commissioners of Vermont Respecting their last Proposals of a Proclamation &c. with the Commissioners answers annexed, viz.

Query 1st. Do those proposals fully coincide with the opinion of the Governor and Council, or such part of them as wish for a British Government?

Answer. Answered in the affirmative.

Query 2nd. What effect (or particular advantages) will such a Proclamation have in your Assembly?

Ans. It will lay a foundation for the friends to Government to enter fully on the business, authoritively facilitate a close of the subject, as it will contain the Generals Proposals.

Query 3d. Will it not tend to enrage them and Effectually put an end to any further Negociation?

Ans. It cannot alarm the Legislature, so much as to have the subject proposed to them by the Governor and Council, as Congress and the world will be at a loss to judge what occasioned such Proclamation. as all former private Negociations on the subject will still remain in Oblivion.

Query 4th. Will it not alarm Congress and Gain from them a pretended compliance with all the demands of Vermont?

Answer. The articles of Confederation virtually preclude a Compliance, nor can it alarm Congress, or the other States more than to have the matter Litigated at large in the Assembly as they are possessed of Lord George Gearmain letter to Sir Henry Clinton.

Query 5th. Shall you make the Proclamation public or not?

Answer. It will be conveyed immediately on reception to the Speaker, and opened in presence of the Assembly.

Query 6th. Do you candidly believe it probable that the Assembly and populace in general will close with the Proclamation, Provided it gives them Charter Privileges Similar to those of Connecticut or nearly the same.

Answer. Our new election warrants the highest probability.

Query 7th. If the Proclamation should be rejected, will there be a probability or even a possibility of a reunion after such a rejection?

Answer. Even should the Proposals be rejected we are confident it would not effect those who are now in favor of Government, but add to the members who would still pursue the grand Object.

Ira Allen.
Joseph Fay.

Skeensborough Sept.
20th. 1781.

[illegible]

Quereys From Capt. Sherwood to the Commissioners of Vermont respecting their last proposals of a Proclamation, &c.

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J. Sherwood } Commissioner.

Skenesborough
Sept: 20th, 1781.

The Commissioners on the Part of Vermont Propose for Consideration viz.

That in our opinion the first Procedure of the new Legislature of Vermont will be to form into a Committee of the Whole to hear the Reports of their Agents from Congress, and then to take into Consideration the Proposals from Congress. When we have every reason to expect them to be rejected, when the Legislature will proceede to Business as the Members are from all parts of the State and many of them strangers to each other, it will not be amiss for them to be a few days together before a public Litigation of a Change of Government, And in order to that we would propose whether a Proclamation from his Excellency, General Haldimand to be then exhibited to the Legislature might not answer a valuable purpose, as it lay a foundation for them to Proceed upon. Such Proclamation to contain the Terms the Court of Great B. Have authorized his Excellency to give Vermont, which we could wish, as the citizens of Vermont are principally Emigrants from the New England Government, that their Privileges might be as near those they have been accustomed to as may be

That there should be no undue advantage taken in such Proclamation, we propose ~~that~~ it be lodged with the Generals Commissioners on the lake that as soon as the Legislature have rejected the Offers, that a confidential person be forwarded to said Commissioners, with that information, when a Flag should be sent to Castleton with such Proclamation, sealed and directed to the Legislature, when General Enos will forward them unopened

Address to the Legislature.

Ezra Allen,
Joseph Farr.

[illegible]
Oct. 20th 1781.

(Filed Allen and Farr Originals No. 1.)

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Skeenesborough, Sept. 16th, 1845.

1781

Private.

Gentlemen,

We have to inform you that we are at this place waiting your arrival and are furnished with Instructions from the Governor in writing to negotiate business with you Relative to a change of Government and are possessed of every paper respecting the proceedings of Congress with the Agents of Vermont, &c.

We have made every preparation for your reception that the situation of the place will admit and expect an agreeable interview with you as soon as may be as it will be of more consequence than can be expressed in this paper.

We are, Gentlemen, with sentiments of Esteem,
Your Humble Servants
Ira Allen
Joseph Fay

To George Smith, &
Justus Sherwood Esqrs.

Arlington, Sept 2d 1781.

Gentlemen,

I have consulted my Council on the subject of the present negociations relative to the settlement of a Neutrality between his Excellency General Haldimand and this State; and as there is some matters of importance relative to the late overtures made by Congress to this State, which is necessary to be communicated to General Haldimand, for his information; as also to acquaint him of the probability of bringing about a Change of Government in October next; and to concert proper Measures to be pursued on both sides for that purpose; Therefore You are hereby required & fully authorized to proceede to Skeenesborough where you will meet Commissioners authorized from General Haldimand, with whom you will treat on the subject and return your doings to me.

I am, Gentlemen, with sentiments of Esteem,
Your most Obedient Humble Servant

Thomas Chittenden.

Colonel Allen, &
Major Fay.

Philadelphia 18th August, 1781.

Questions Proposed by the Committee of Congress to the Agents on the part of Vermont with the agents' answers annexed.

Question 1. Are the boundaries set forth in the written propositions delivered in by the said agents at this time claimed by the State of Vermont as the line of jurisdiction the same as contained in the Resolution of Congress of the 7th of August instant?

Answer. They are the same with the addition of part of the waters of Lake Champlaine, for the benefit of trade, &c.

Question 2d What part do the people of Vermont mean to take as to the past expences of the present war, and what aid do they propose to afford as to men and money to the common defence?

Answer. Such proportion as shall be mutually judged equitable after their admission to a seat in Congress, which has been, at several different times officially proposed by Agents on the part of Vermont.

Question 3d. What are the Ideas of the people of Vermont relative to the claim of private property under Grants or patents from N. Hampshire, or N. York previous to the present revolution?

Answer. Although the Legislature of Vermont hath not hitherto authorized any Court to take Cognizance of such causes, as respect titles to Lands, nevertheless, they have had and still have it in contemplation to adopt such modes as the circumstances arising out of each case may justify without adhering to the strict rules of law.

Question 4th What are the intentions of your constituents with regard to those patents that were granted on condition of settlement within a given time, and which have been prevented by the claims of the people of Vermont and the present revolution?

Answer. No forfeitures have been taken by the State of Vermont on any such grants for a non performance of condition of settlement, and we conceive it to be the intention of our constituents to grant a further reasonable time for fulfilling such conditions.

Question 5th What are the number of the Inhabitants within the lines mentioned in their propositions above mentioned?

Answer. The citizens of Vermont have not lately been numbered – we can therefore only estimate them at about thirty thousand which we conceive to be nearly a true estimate.

Question 6th What quantity of land is contained within the said bounds?

Answer. There has been no accurate survey of the State of Vermont, but we conceive it to contain about five millions of acres.

Question 7th. What applications have been made either publicly or privately by the enemies of the United States or their adherents to draw off the people of Vermont from their affection to the United States of America?

Answer. The Hon. Committee are possessed of copies of Beverly Robinson's letters inclosed in Brigadier Gen. Allen's letter of the ninth of March last to the then President of Congress. Any private offers we cannot avouch for.

Question 8th In case the enemy should attempt an invasion of the Northern Frontiers, what aid as to men and provisions could be raised in the State of Vermont, for the public defence; You can suppose the invasion made in different quarters, & within what time?

Answer. The number of Militia within the lines herein limited, we suppose to consist of about seven thousand – are in general well armed and accoutred, and have ever shown themselves spirited in case of alarms &c. In regard to provisions, the country is fertile, but new and considerable imigrations from other States to Vermont. The Legislature at their session in October last levied a tax on the Inhabitants for provisions sufficient to victualling one thousand five hundred troops in the field for twelve months, and we are of opinion a larger Store may be in the same manner collected the ensuing Autumn —

Longale Block House 21st August, 1781.

Dear Sir,

I have the Honor to acknowledge your favor by Major Fay, with Pope's Essay on Man, for which I Beg leave to Return you my best thanks.

I find Major Fay the Gentleman you represent him to be, and however different our political sentiments are you may be assured that my former personal friendship for you and him remains inviolate. As I have requested the Major to present my Compliments to Governor Chittenden and the Gentlemen of Vermont, in General, have only to request you will remember me to my former good friend General Allen with compliments and best respects to Mrs. Allen and the young Lady (the Generals daughter.

Believe me, Dear Sir, sincerely your personal
Friend and Most Humble Servant
J. Sherwood.

Col. Ira Allen.

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Letter August 14th, 1781, from Jonas Fay, Ira Allen & Beza Woodward, read the same day. Refered to Mr. Boudinot and others, Mr. B. Mr. Vandike, Mr. Carroll Mr Randolph Mr. Montgomery

Philadelphia August 14th 1781.

Sir,

We have the honor to inclose a duplicate of our Commission to attend on the Honorable the Congress and have to add that we are ready to enter upon the business of our Appointment.

We are with Esteem
Your Excellency's,
Humble Servants,
Jonas Fay.
Ira Allen.
Beza Woodward.

His Excellency
The President of Congress

The United States in Congress Assembled, desirous of bringing to a speedy decision the claim of the People inhabiting the territory called Vermont, to Independence and an admission into the Confederation, upon the grounds laid down in the Resolutions of the 7th day of this instant, & Jonas Fay, Ira Allen, & Bezaleel Woodward Esquires introducing a Commission under the hand of Thomas Chittenden Esq. impowering them amongst other things to propose to and receive from them terms of an Union of this said Territory with the United States, and requesting to be heard on the Subject of their Mission.

Resolved That it be an instruction to the Committee appointed under the Resolutions aforesaid to receive the propositions of their mission to confer with the said Jonas Fay, Ira Allen, & Bezaleel Woodward Esqrs. relating to the subject of giving & to give Notice to the Delegates attending Congress from New Hampshire & New York, of the time and place of Receiving such propositions, such conference and to report thereon.

Resolved That this resolution shall not be construed into a departure from the Pledge, made by Congress in the resolutions aforesaid to the States aforesaid.

Sunderland 14th July, 1781.

Dear Sir,

Herewith you will receive Popes Assay on Man by by Major Fay, in whom you may place the highest confidence from his close attachments in endeavouring to bring about a settlement, an event which is so interesting and consonant to our wishes. Nothing could have given me more pleasure than to have waited on you upon this occasion, had not the Legislature appointed me one of the Agents to Congress. Much depends on the management of affairs at that place in effecting the revolution intended at the meeting of our Legislature in October next. You will be favored with the perusal of my letter to General Haldimand, in which I have been more particular

You will present my best compliments to the other Gentlemen Commissioners, Mrs. Sherwood &c. and Me to be, Dear Sir, Sincerely & Servant

Ira Allen

Capt. J. Sherwood.

State of Vermont
Sunderland July 10 th. 1781.

Sir,

This State has become the topic of discourse throughout the United States. Various are the conjectures and prognostications of the populace abroad. I have authorative accounts from Congress that they spent several days last Spring on the question of Vermont: That it was the sense of Congress (after lengthy debates) to make no determination respecting it this Campaign or to the end of the War. The Legislature of this State convened at Bennington in June last. By emissaries from the other States, or otherwise, the very great Whigs in this State were much alarmed on account of Neutrality &c. When it was found on a political scrutiny that there were a majority of that denomination in the Legislature, who together with the influence of some others that attended, crouded for an inquiry to know from whence the report of Neutrality &c originated; requesting that what had passed to and from the province of Quebec might be laid before the House.

When the Governor, Council, and Assembly resolved themselves into a Committee of the whole for the aforesaid inquiry and to determine on the expediency of sending agents to Congress. When I was called on for information I affected a willingness to give them every information in my power, observing that on my arrival from the Isle Aux Noix, I exhibited my papers &c to the Governor and those of the Council that were then present who appeared well satisfied with my proceedings; that not knowing that the Assembly would wish to see the papers, I had left them at home, that I was willing to give them a verbal account, or go and fetch the papers as they might choose. When the Committee adjourned I went and fetched the papers. When the letters that had passed between General

Haldimand and Chittenden, General Allen and Major Carlton, Major Dundas and myself were read & I made a Speech to the audience in such as gave satisfaction to the spies from the Neighboring States, and the great Whigs in this State, that there was no truce or Neutrality intended by this State; yet that the British Government was willing to grant Vermont Charter Privileges for a colony, if they would accept them.

Then it was agreed that three agents should be appointed to attend on Congress with full powers to make and receive proposals for articles of Union between the United States and Vermont, and to take seats in Congress; When Jonas Fay and Ira Allen and Beza. Woodward Esquires were elected. (It is to be observed that they are not on all one footing.) It is expected that the Agents will make offers to Congress that will not be accepted, by which means those in favor of Government will be able to evince to the people of this State that Congress mean nothing more than to keep this State in suspence to the end of the war, and then divide her territory amongst the claiming States (which is doubtless the intention of many.) This together with such other matters as may be safely intrusted will be in agitation before the next election. These matters are ripening as fast as the nature of the case will permit. It is exceedingly difficult and somewhat dangerous attempting to change the opinions of large and popular bodies. Nor can any possible advantage arise by any of those in power to publish their sentiments in that respect, until the proper crisis shall arrive; for this is a popular Government and her officers annually elected by the suffrages of the people. Therefore carrying these matters is some measure under the rose, until the next election, when in all human probability, a large majority of the then officers of Government will be well disposed, and then, by the advantages of another denial from Congress, and having the reins of Government in their hands for one year, they will make a revolution so long wished for by many. A considerable part of the citizens of this State are imigrants from Connecticut and would choose charter privileges similar to that Government, and would expect to remain a reasonable time in a state of Neutrality. However hope that there will be no difficulty on those accounts.

General Allen has resigned and taken to his old studies Philosophy. General Bellows declines serving. Col. Safford and Fletcher are elected in their stead. General Enos Commands this State's troops in service. Those three Generals are acquainted with my proceedures at the Isle Aux Noix, &c.

The result of whatever may take place at Congress, shall transmit to you. The agents are to start on the first of August, and will probably return the fore part of September. Request that the signal agreed on by Capt. Sherwood and myself might be continued, as that may be the best way for conveyance.

I am with sentiments of Esteem
Your Excellency's
Most Obedient Humble Servant,
Ira Allen.

His Excellency
General Haldimand.

State of Vermont 10th July 1781.

Whereas this State is not in union with the United States, altho' often requested &c.

This the British power are acquainted with, and are endeavouring to take the advantage of these disputes; thereby to Court a connection with this State on the principle of establishing it a British Province.

From various accounts we are well assured that the British have a force in Canada larger than this State can at present raise and support in the field, and this State having no assurance of any assistance from any or either of the United States, however hard the British forces may croud on this State from the Province of Quebec by the advantage of the waters of lake Champlain &c. Altho' several expresses have been sent by the Governor of this State to several of the respective Governors of the United States, with the most urgent request to know whether any assistance would be afforded in such case, and no official answer has been made by either of them.

Wherefore we the subscribers do fully approbate Col. Ira Allen sending a letter Dated Sunderland July 10th, A.D 1781. and directed to General Haldimand and another letter to Captain Justice Sherwood purporting an intention of this State becoming a British Province &c. This we consider as a Political procedure to prevent the British forces invading this State and being a necessary step to preserve this State from ruin when we have too much reason to apprehend that this has been the wish of some of our assuming Neighbours, in the mean time to strengthen the State against any insult until this State shall receive better treatment from the United States, or obtain a seat in Congress

Thomas Chittenden.
J. Fay
John Fasset.
Samuel Robinson,
Timothy Brownson;
Joseph Fay.

General Haldimand

Isle Aux Noix, May 8th 1781.

Sir,

I herewith exhibit sundry papers, by which your Excellency will see the peculiar situation of the State of Vermont. A copy of my Instructions for settling a Cartel, together with some other papers I have delivered to Majr Dundas, which I expect he will transmit to you. have seen your instructions to Majr Dundas, and Capt Sherwood, and find some embarrassment by their not being both on one footing, when you consider the natural evils attending large popular bodies, you will not be surprised that my Instructions are in the form they at present are.

I have freely conversed with Capt Sherwood, and hope the proceedure will make way for some further, and would not be to the mutual benefit of the contending Powers, to their troops within their respective lines. The Legislature of Vermont stands adjourned to about the middle of June next, when it is expected that the People east of the Hudson river and west of our former Lines will be represented, in the Legislature of said State, when another flag will be sent with ample powers, to Exchange Prisoners Provided a Cartel is now settled, and to transact such other business as may be then judged proper.

I am with due respect Your
Excellency's Most Obedient
Humble Servant.
Ira Allen.

His Excellency
General Haldimand.

Sunderland. March 10th 1781.

Sir,

I herewith transmit to your Excellency an Act of the Legislature of the State of Vermont, Laying a Jurisdictional Claim to the land therein Specified also an Act purporting articles of Union between this State and a Convention held at Cornish in February last. As a private Gentleman thought proper to transmit to Congress this information, altho' this State declines further application.

I am with Sentiments of esteem
Your Excellency's Humble Servant
Ira Allen

To His Excellency
Samuel Huntington Esq.

Extracts &c March 11th. 1781

The Q. of the N.H.G. will soon be settled as the S. of that name urges its final decision, and there is great reason it will be great and honorable to this State -

The cession made by Virginia to the United States hath removed the cause of opposition which Maryland gave to have our disputes not settled, and the other Small States not near us will case their opinion, as the contention respecting it is now removed.

State of Vermont June 1781.

Whereas Col. Ira Allen has been with a flag to the Province of Quebec for the purpose of settling a Cartel, or Exchange of Prisoners and has used his best Policy, by Feegning and Endeavouring to make them believe that the State of Vermont had a desire to Negotiate a Treaty of Peace with Britain — thereby to prevent their immediate invasion upon the frontiers of this State as appears by the letter he sent to General Haldimand, dated May 8th 1781 inclosing a copy of Col. Beverly Robinson's letter to General Allen, and General Allen's letter &c. sent to Congress, and the Resolutions of the Assembly of Vermont, approbating the same, as also the circular letter to the several States, Delivered to Dundas according to his verbal report made to us this day.

We are of the opinion that the Critical Circumstances this State is in being out of Union with the United States, and thereby unable to make that vigorous defence we could wish for — think it to be a necessary Political Manoeuvre to save the frontiers of this State.

Thomas Chittenden   Jonas Fay
Moses Robinson   Samuel Safford
Timo Brownson   Samuel Robinson
John Fasset   Joseph Fay

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State of New-Hampshire.

In the Year of our Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and Eighty-one.

An Act

28 Nov. 1781

For impowering the Sheriff of the County of Cheshire to release from Prison sundry of the good Subjects of this State, imprisoned by certain evil-minded Persons, assuming Authority for so doing under the People inhabiting a Territory commonly called Vermont; and for apprehending the Persons so offending.

Whereas the People inhabiting a Tract of Country on the West Side of Connecticut River, originally granted by this State, and afterwoods claimed by the State of New York, have erected themselves into a separate and independent Jurisdiction by the name of the State of Vermont; And whereas Sundry Persons have, by Colour of Authority under the said pretended State of Vermont, acted as civil Officers, passed Judgment and committed to Prison sundry of the good Subjects of this State, and have seduced many of the Inhabitants of the Counties of Cheshire and Grafton to submit to the Jurisdiction of the said pretended State of Vermont, by Means whereof the proper Officers of the said Counties may be unable to release the good Subjects of this State from such illegal Imprisonment, and to apprehend the Persons so offending, without the Special Aid of this Assembly; and inasmuch as an impartial Trial of the said Offenders cannot probably be had within the said Counties where the Offenders have or may be committed:

Therefore,

Be it enacted by the Council and House of Representatives, in General Assembly convened, and by the Authority of the same, it is hereby enacted, That the Committee of Safety be, and hereby is impowered and authorized to issue their Order to the Sheriff of the County of Cheshire to release from Prison all Persons confined, or who may hereafter be confined in either of the said Counties by Order, Process or Authority of any pretended Court, Magistrate, Officers, or other Persons claiming Authority from the said pretended State of Vermont, and to apprehend the Persons, who heretofore have exercised, or who hereafter shall attempt to exercise any Office, Power or Authority within the said Counties of Cheshire and Grafton, from by or under the said pretended Authority of Vermont, and to convey said Offenders to the common Goal in the County of Rockingham or such other County in this State as the said Committee may order, there to remain until released by Order of the General Assembly, the Committee of Safety, or by due course of Law.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That the said Committee of Safety be, and hereby are impowered to authorize the Sheriff of the said County of Cheshire to call upon the Sheriffs of any or either of the other Counties in this State, to raise the body of their respective Counties to aid and assist him in executing the Order of the Committee of Safety, either to release Persons imprisoned as aforesaid, or to apprehend the Person or Persons imprisoning them, and to convey the said Offenders to any Prison within this State, and also to command the Aid of any Officer or Officers of the Militia or Troops of this State, which may at the time be within the Limits thereof, and commanded by an Officer Commissioned by this State, and all Officers and other Subjects of this State shall yield due obedience to ~~such~~ such command.

And be it further enacted by the Authority aforesaid, That several and respective Courts of Judicature in the County or Counties where the said Offenders may be confined, be and they are hereby respectively impowered to hear, try and determine any Process or Processes against the said Offenders, and to give Judgment and award Execution thereon in the same Manner as though the Offences had been committed within the Body of the County where such Trial is had; any Law, Usage or Custom to the contrary in any wise notwithstanding.

State of New-Hampshire } In the House of Representatives November 27th, 1781.

The foregoing BILL having been read a third Time, Voted, That it pass to be enacted,
Sent up for Concurrence
Wm. Whipple.
Speaker P. T.

In Council, November 28th, 1781.

This BILL was read a third Time, and voted That the same be enacted
M. Weare, President.

Copy examined by Joseph Pearson, D. Sec'ry.

Newbury, 27 May, 1781.

Sir,

Your Excellency will be tired to read so many letters from me at once however I cannot but inform what I have and is probable to be true. Last evening came a deserter from Canada, deserted from a party on the day before 10 o'clock – He says that on the twelfth of May orders were received at St Johns from the Commander at Quebec the Emigrant Regiment Sir John Johnsons Regiment, the three corps of Rangers and a detachment from the other Regiments together with those nations of Indians were to assemble at St Johns the 10th June where every provision was made for them – 150 Batteaux five Gun Boats &c. That Spies and small parties were out for Mischief. A Flag is now at Canada from Vermont (I am afraid) to agree to a Neutrality (Ira Allen Commands it) if so the Enemy will be at Albany, or try for it.

If six or eight Men were from the Grants, it would be well, for they deceive the innocent.

I am your Excellency's most
Obedient humble Servant
Jacob Bayley

General Washington.

Copy of Reasons &c, exhibited to General Haldemand by Capt. Sherwood, May 11th A.D. 1781.

Isle Aux Noix, May 11th, 1781.

Sir,

I have the honor to transmit for his Excellency's information the following reasons, and sentiments of Col. Allen as he has exhibited them to me. viz, The Circular Letters to the Neighboring States (Inclosed by Majr. Dundas) were designed by the Cabinet of Vermont as a Political Stroke to Keep the Neighboring States from Committing Hostilities on them, when they declared Nutrality, as also to Imbarrass Congress in that Respect, and as the Claiming States had done everything in their Power to make Discord in Vermont, and had in some measure Succeeded, as there had been a Large body of Men in the Easterly Part of the State in favor of N. York, (a good many of which were secretly in favor of British Government) An other Considerable Body of men Living Contiguous to Connecticut River, for cinister Views had ever opposed the River's being the Boundary line between the Respective States of N. Hampshire ~~and~~ & Vermont & after Vermont Relinquished her jurisdiction to Sixteen Towns East of s'd River, the People on the Two sides of the said River Refused to subject themselves to Either Government Except in some things Respecting the War. They Petitioned the Genl. Court of N. Hampshire to Extend Jurisdiction over them & the Whole of Vermont, which was in agitation in Congress but the three Claiming States Could not agree, and Congress not making a decision at the Time they set in September last, on which the Politicians of New Hampshire thought by Raising a Convention from all the disaffected of the Two States Contiguous to Connecticut River & by that means get them get them Connected with New Hampshire When the Cabinet of Vermont Thought That Considering all the Clandestine and unjustifiable Proceedings of New Hampshire they were then Ripe for Giving N. H— a Heavy Blow An agen was sent to said Convention a Committee was appointed to Treat with the Legislature of Vermont, and the Convention adjourned to the same day said Legislature were to Convene & the Legislature when Convened Laid a Jurisdictional Claim East to the Mason line, (being about Twenty Miles E. of Connecticut River) & West to Hudson's River Articles of Union were then agreed o Between the Legislature and Convention and sent out for the approbation of the People which was almost unanimous the Legislature adjourned for a short Space & Convened again when the Eastern District were ful Represented and Proceeded to Business with Great Harmon

A Large Number of Petitions was sent from the People Inhabiting within s'd Western Claim Requesting an Extension of Jurisdiction &c when a Committee was appointed to attend a Convention to be held at Cambridge in Instant May with full Powers to agree on Articles of Union the Legislature adjourned to about the Middle of June next to be convened at Bennington when it is Expected the Western District will be fully Represented as the People there have been some years wishing for a Union with Vermont, but have been held off, as the Cabinet of Vermont Waited a more favorable opportunity when they could Justify their Conduct to the World by the Ill Treatment of N. York &c. within this Western Claim are a Respectable Number in favor of British Government ——— The Reason of Col. Bev. Robinsons Letters and that of Gen.l Allen's being sent to Congress are some accounts had arrived from Long Island Purporting that Gen.l Allen had received such Letters They were first Promulgated amongst those in favor of Government from that to some others &c Mr. Robinson's second Letter had not arrived, which was mentioned in his third. It was however necessary that some Immediate Step Should be Taken to Passify those of the Populace that had Taken an Early & active part in this war. for many of them thought that after the Declaration of Independence Congress was next to God Almighty Both in Power & perfiction, & it has been with great difficulty that that Idea is so far erased & is at Present in such a Decline. and as the scene must be opened to this Hot headed Multitude before Nutrality could be Declared it was judged that the best way of Promulgation was to send the Identical Letters to Congress with a proper Letter from Genl Allen, that it should go in a Male from Hartford & that the copies should be read in the Legislature at their Next Session After said Letters were read & his Excellency the Governor & sundry members of the Legislature had advanced Arguments Purporting the Right of Vermont to hold corrispondence with any Power, or to offer or accept Terms of cisation of Hostilities with any Power. The Injustice of the Claiming States & Congress— The unreasonableness of Vermonts supposing herself under obligation to fight to support the Independence of the United States & they Left at full Liberty to usurp the Rights of Vermont. That by the conduct of Congress and the Claiming States, it appeared they were willing Vermont should defend their Respective frontiers so far as they could & if Vermont should by the War ever so much depopulated, it would still be to their advantage as their intentions appeared to be to Divide Sd State amongst the Claiming States at the End of the War &c.— The Question being put, whether the Procedure had on Sd. Robinson's Letters and that of Genl Allen was approbated by the House when it passed in the affirmative— There is every Reason to suppose That these Proceedings will have their Desired Effect But it must be a Work of Time Popular Bodies move slow— The people of Vermont are ripening for a Nutrality as fast as the Wheels of Time can vote — Some Politicians are of opinion it may be accomplished before the Rising of the Next Session of Assembly But in such Case it will be Expected that Commissioners authorized on the Part of Vermont will Negotiate such Business with Commissioners in some Way duly authorized from the Court of Great Britain to approbate Vermont to be a Nutral State to the End of the War — for Vermont at Present to Consent to be a British Province would be little more than changing the Tables & make Vermont the Seat of War.

The Citizens of Vermont are of opinion that the demands of Great Britain upon her Colonists were unreasonable, which induced them to take an active Part in the War — nor have they yet altered their opinions in that respect. But the Treatment they have met with from Congress and the Claiming States, Considering the active Part they have taken in this war, Has raised a Greater Resentment in the minds of the More Contemplative against Congress and the Claiming States, than they have against Great Britain & Considering the Extent of their Territory and Numbers of Inhabitants are fully sensible that they cannot continue a seperate Power, But that in Time they must connect with some More aged & powerful & when their contiguous Situation to that of the New England States, the ties of Consanguinity &c. the Debts contracted by the United States &c. Vermont are Clear of Debts & wish to Remain so. Upon a full Consideration of the Peculiar Situation of Vermont the Leading Men there are doing every thing in their Power to Bring about Nutrality But as has been before observed, that in order to settle some Broils in the State it was Necessary to Close said unions, which in some respects Tends to Postpone a Completion of Nutrality. Yet when once effected it will be the more powerful and permanent. Whether Congress or the Claiming

States would use coercive Measures with Vermont or not on such a Declaration is at present uncertain However should they attempt it, Should choose to Try them one Battle before we called for any assistance.

Should any considerable force be sent to Invade the frontiers of N. York before Nutratity can be Settled, would propose a feint to be made towards the frontiers of Vermont which would enable the Officers of Vermont that are principle in Command to detain their other officers & Men that are so exceedingly Great Whigs.

Col. Allen's Reasons for settling a Cartel are to shew to the People of Vermont that the British Genl. will consider Vermont a State unconnected with the United: & thereby enable them to collect a sufficient Number of Prisoners that were taken with Genl Burgoine & else where that are now Scattered in the country to exchange for those in Canada, and to continue an Interchange by Flags. The Prisoners Taken at fort Ann and Skeenesborough will at a future Period, when Vermont exercises Jurisdiction there, come under Consideration